Heavenly Children

The Burning Question

Imam al-Kazim (a)

9

SUGGESTED AGES 7+

KISA KIDS PUBLICATIONS
Under the Guidance of Moulana Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)

Disclaimer: Religious texts have ***not*** been translated verbatim so as to meet the developmental and comprehension needs of children.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the beloved Imām of our time (ʿaj).
May Allah (swt) hasten his reappearance and help us to become his true companions.

Original Author

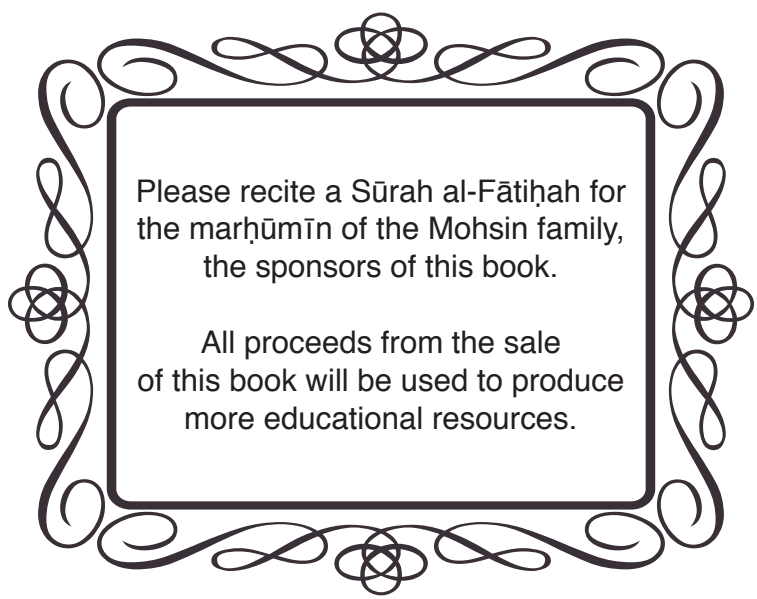
Abul Faḍl Hādī Manish

Acknowledgments

Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ): On the Day of Resurrection, the ink of the scholars will be weighed up against the blood of the martyrs, and the ink of the scholars will be heavier than the blood of the martyrs.
Nahj al-Faṣāḥah, Saying #3222.

True reward lies with Allah (swt), but we would like to sincerely thank Shaykh Salim Yusufali, Brother Aliakbar Shaheidari, Sisters Sabika Mithani, Fatemah Mithani, Amna Hussain, Asieh Zarghami, Zahra Sabur, Sajeda Merchant, Kisae Nazar, Sarah Assaf, Nadia Dossani, Fathema Abidi, Fatemeh Eslami, Fatima Hussain, Fatemah Meghji, Abeda Khimji, Sakeena Kalyan, Zehra Abbas, and Rumina Hashmani. We would especially like to thank Nainava Publications for their artwork and contributions.

May Allah (swt) bless them in this world and the next.


Please recite a Sūrah al-Fātiḥah for the marḥūmīn of the Mohsin family, the sponsors of this book.
All proceeds from the sale of this book will be used to produce more educational resources.

Transliteration Chart

Arabic terms in this book have been transliterated according to the following guidelines*:

ء	a, i, or u (initial form)
ء	ʾ (medial or final form)
ا	a
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	ʿ
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y

ـَ	a
ـِ	i
ـُ	u
ـّ	double letter
آ / ـَا / ىٰ	ā
ـِي	ī
ـُو	ū

*Please note that due to limitations, the transliteration is not 100% accurate in capturing tajwīd rules.

Preface

Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ):
Nurture and raise your children in the best way. Raise them with the love of the Prophets and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa).

Literature is an influential form of media that often shapes the thoughts and views of an entire generation. Therefore, in order to establish an Islamic foundation for the future generations, there is a dire need for compelling Islamic literature. Over the past several years, this need has become increasingly prevalent throughout Islamic centers and schools everywhere. Due to the growing dissonance between parents, children, society, and the teachings of Islam and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), this need has become even more pressing. Al-Kisa Foundation, along with its subsidiary, Kisa Kids Publications, was conceived in an effort to help bridge this gap with the guidance of ʿulamāʾ and the help of educators. We would like to make this a communal effort and platform. Therefore, we sincerely welcome constructive feedback and help in any capacity.

The goal of the *Heavenly Children* series is to foster the love of Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) in children and to help them establish the 14 Maʿṣūmīn as their role models. We hope that you and your children enjoy these books and use them as a means to achieve this goal, inshāʾAllāh. We pray to Allah to give us the strength and *tawfīq* to perform our duties and responsibilities.

With Duʿās,
Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)

About the Board ʿĀlim

Moulana Nabi R. Mir (Abidi) is a scholar, an educator, a father, and an enthusiast for creating educational infrastructure and Islamic resources for the benefit of the global community. Always wanting to think 'outside of the box' by supporting the creation of innovative materials to engage young readers to pick up Islamic books, interact with Qurʾānic games, learn from the Steps to Perfection Curriculum, and begin their life-long journey of holistic education.

Being a dedicated student and graduate of *Darse Khārij* from the *Ḥawzah* (the Highest Level of Islamic Studies in the Seminary), Moulana Abidi knows the value of Islamic education. Also, having grown up in India, and now residing in the United States, he has had the honor of traveling to various communities and meeting many community leaders. He values the importance of collaboration and working together to optimize potentials, and to create open source platforms so that information and resources are available and accessible to everyone around the world.

You, dear reader, are now part of the Al-Kisa family.
Share the word, and join the mission.

In preparation for their big trip to visit the fourteen Maʿṣūmīn, Ahmad and his parents were discussing all the places they would go and which Maʿṣūmīn they would visit there. Mama had just finished telling a story about Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa).

Ahmad giggled. “Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) taught me that this comes from the spleen!” he laughed. Mama and Baba laughed, too.

“So,” he said, composing himself. “We are visiting six of the Maʿṣūmīn in Medina. Where will we go then?”

“We will also be visiting the city of Kāẓimayn in Iraq. Two Imāms are buried there. One of them is our seventh Imām, Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʿa),” Mama said.

“Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) in Kāẓimayn!” Ahmad noticed how the names were similar.

“Right!” Baba said, “the city is actually now named for him. Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) was born on the 7th of Ṣafar to Imām Ja’far aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) and Ḥaḍrat Ḥamīdah.”

“Can you tell me more about him?” Ahmad asked curiously.

“Well, let’s see…One important thing to remember is that Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) was alive under the rule of many evil caliphs, such as Hārūn ar-Rashīd. Hārūn did not like that the people loved Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa), so he put him in prison for a long time. Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) was very patient, though, and even while he was in prison, he would thank Allah for giving him the opportunity to worship Him,” said Mama.

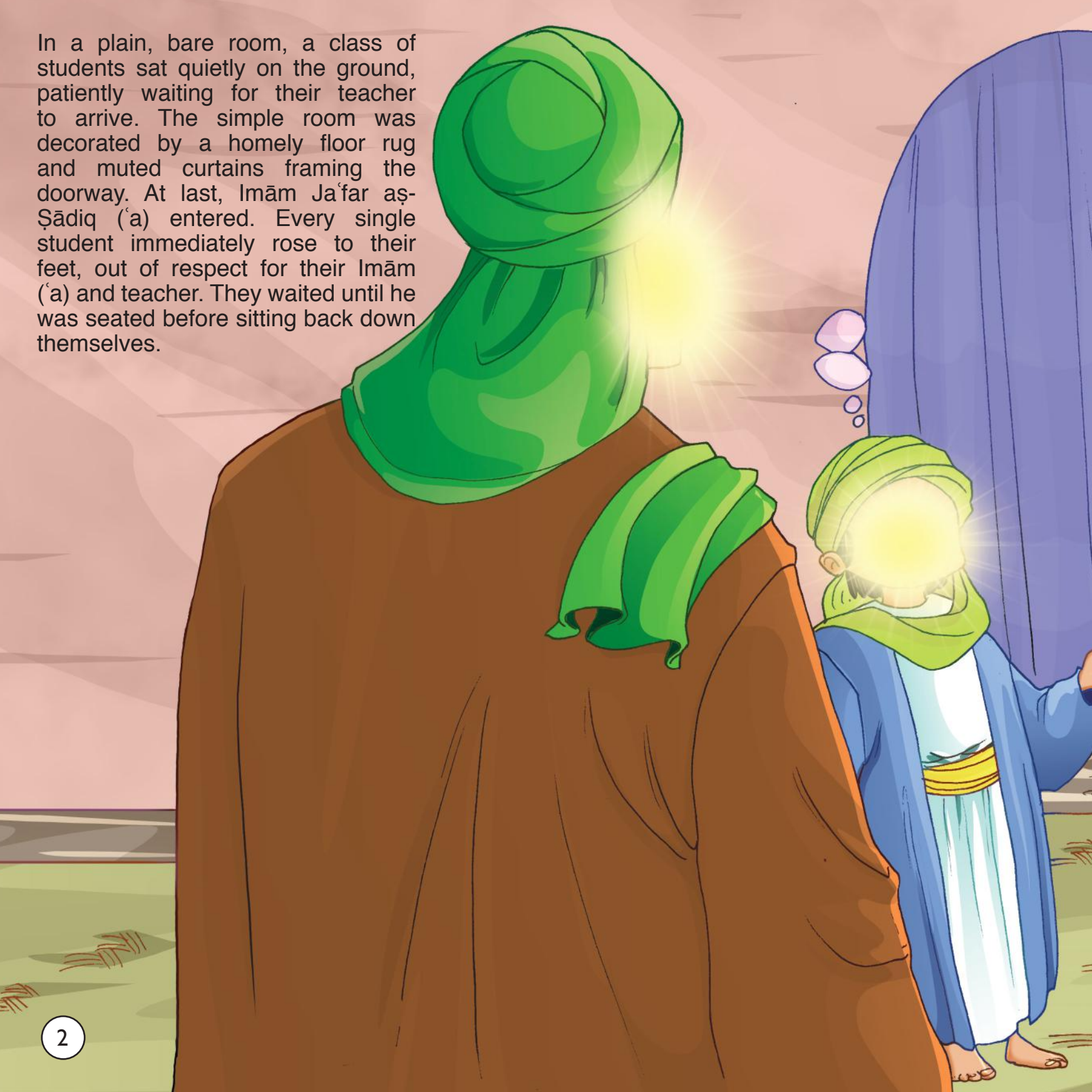
“That’s really patient,” Ahmad said with awe. “Sometimes, I don’t even like sitting in the car for the ride to school, it seems so long! How long was he in prison?”

“Oh, Ahmad. A long, long time. He was in prison for almost all of the last nineteen years of his life, and he was still in prison when he was martyred. He was poisoned by one of the prison guards on the 25th of Rajab.” Mama shook her head sadly.

“Oh, that’s terrible.” Ahmad said with a frown. “Baba, do you know any stories from when Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) was my age?”

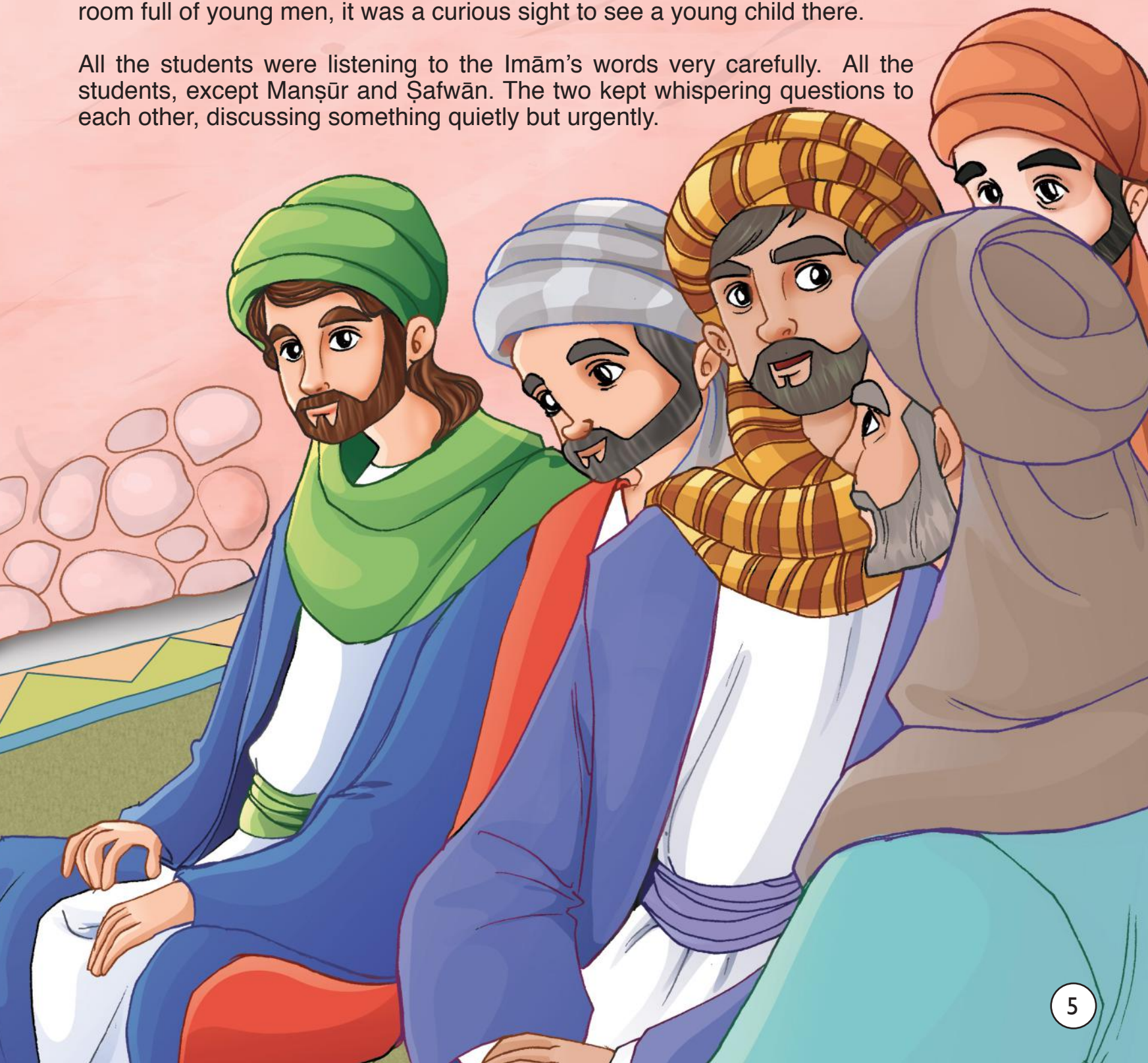
“Sure!” Baba replied, “I know a great story about our Imām!”

In a plain, bare room, a class of students sat quietly on the ground, patiently waiting for their teacher to arrive. The simple room was decorated by a homely floor rug and muted curtains framing the doorway. At last, Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) entered. Every single student immediately rose to their feet, out of respect for their Imām (ʿa) and teacher. They waited until he was seated before sitting back down themselves.



As the Imām (ʿa) began his lesson, a little boy sat down right next to him. In a room full of young men, it was a curious sight to see a young child there.

All the students were listening to the Imām's words very carefully. All the students, except Manṣūr and Ṣafwān. The two kept whispering questions to each other, discussing something quietly but urgently.



But they weren't discussing what they would do after class or what they did last night. No, they were discussing something they wanted to ask in class. Manṣūr had a burning question, except he wasn't sure how to bring it up. Still, the question kept turning over in his mind.

The Imām (ʿa) continued class, speaking graciously and softly, teaching the students what they needed to know to become closer and more obedient to Allah. His kind face and words reminded Manṣūr what a nice, honorable person Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) was. Even the small child next to him was enjoying the words of the Imām (ʿa). This gave Manṣūr reassurance. *Maybe it will be okay to ask my question,* Manṣūr thought to himself.

At that same moment, Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) turned to Manṣūr and gave him a particularly compassionate look. It was almost as if he had read Manṣūr's mind and was telling him, *don't be afraid, be comfortable with me.* Looking into the Imām's gentle eyes, Manṣūr gained the courage to ask his burning question.

Shyly, he looked down and began, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you!* You have taught us that every person will experience death..."

The Imām (ʿa) smiled and nodded, encouraging Manṣūr to continue. The young child looked intently at Manṣūr, eager to hear the question. "May I be sacrificed for you;** when this happens to you, who will be the Imām (ʿa) after you?"

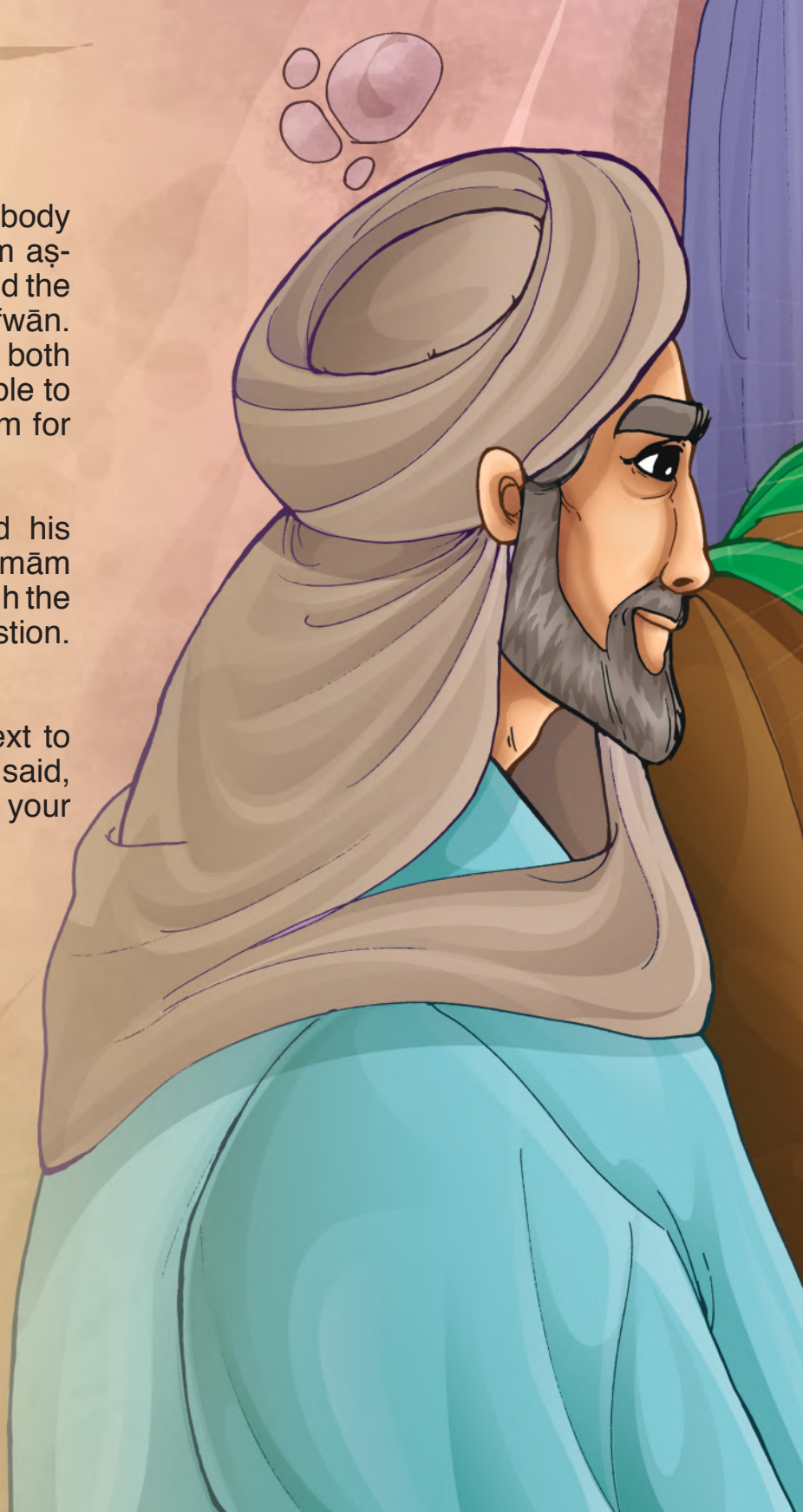
*In our ḥadīth and duʿās, when someone wants to show the highest level of loyalty and love towards another person, they use this expression.

**A phrase that shows complete obedience and loyalty because a person is saying they are ready to give even their life for the Imām (ʿa).

The room became pin drop silent; nobody even dared to breathe! How would Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) respond? Manṣūr looked around the room, and his eyes fell on his friend Ṣafwān. Ṣafwān gave him a friendly smile. They both felt relieved. Finally, Manṣūr had been able to ask the question which had occupied him for so long!

The Imām's face became brighter and his smile grew wider. The child next to the Imām (ʿa) also looked happy. It seemed as though the Imām (ʿa) had been waiting for this question. Manṣūr felt even more relaxed.

The Imām (ʿa) hugged the small boy next to him. "When death comes for me," he said, "this child, Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʿa), will be your Imām."



The child looked lovingly at his father. The Imām (ʿa) caressed the child's head. Everyone looked at the child in awe. His young face was shining brighter than the moon.

Manṣūr looked at the satisfaction on all his classmate's faces. He realized that everyone had been wondering the same thing: who would be their next Imām (ʿa). This made him even more glad to have asked such an important question. Now, everyone knew who the next Imām would be.

Young Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) stood up and went outside. Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) continued teaching his lesson. Shortly after, the Imām (ʿa) ended the class with a du'a. He stood up, exited the room, and all the students followed him out to the yard.

Outside, the young Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) was holding a stick in his hand, using it as a cane. He gently nudged his sheep with the stick. "Hurry now!" he said to the sheep. "We have to do sajdah to Allah, who created us and takes care of us."

All the companions stood around, grinning and laughing as they watched. They were so impressed that even while playing, this little boy constantly remembered Allah and even taught animals about how to worship Him.

Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) walked towards the young Imām (ʿa) and hugged and kissed him. The companions wanted to show their affection for the future Imām as well. One by one, they came forward and kissed Imām al-Kāẓim's hand.

The students remained in the courtyard for some time, talking amongst themselves and enjoying the company of two Maʿṣūmīn. After a while, they politely asked for permission to leave. The Imām (ʿa) picked up his son and seated him on his shoulders. As his students left, Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) and his young son bid farewell to the students. Each of them left more satisfied than ever before.

Uṣūl al-Kāfī, Vol. 2, P. 83 & 87

Glossary

(ṣ): Peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muḥammad and his family

(swt): All Glory belongs to God, the Glorified and Exalted

(ʿa): Peace and blessings be upon him/her

(ʿaj): May God hasten his reappearance

Ahl al-Bayt: Divinely appointed family members of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ)

Akhlāq: Islamic morals and ethics

al-Fātiḥah: The first *sūrah* of the Qurʾān, which is commonly recited and sent as a gift of prayer for the deceased

Alḥamdulillāh: All praise is for God

Baba: Father

Duʿāʾ: Supplication; a deep connection and communication between an individual and God

Imām: A divinely appointed leader, sometimes refers to a spiritual leader

InshāʾAllāh: God-willing

Kaʿbah: The most Sacred Mosque for Muslims, situated in Mecca and is the direction of prayer

Mama: Mother

Marḥūmīn: Someone who has passed away

MāshāʾAllāh: As God wishes

Maʿṣūmīn: One who is inerrant (free of all sins, flaws, and impurities) through the divine protection and knowledge of Allah

Qurʾān: The holy book of Muslims

Sajdah: Prostration

SubḥānAllāh: All Glory and Praise belongs to God

Tawfīq: Divine blessings from God (Allah) that give one the opportunity and ability to thrive towards success

Ziyārah: Visiting the house of Allah, grave of the Noble Prophet, Imāms and other important personalities

ʿUlamāʾ: Scholars

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